1:Nimuendajú E-5 (1941-1942) 1952
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857 From the age of six or seven years, brother and sister no longer play together, each participating in the adult interests of his or her own sex until the age of puberty approaches and with it the major rites of passage tenaciously preserved to this day.

Puberty

Boys' puberty

881 Many Tukuna still vaguely recollect that in the old days the boys were placed in seclusion when their voices changed, but I could not obtain details of this ceremony, since it fell into disuse many generations ago. Castelnau refers to the fact that the youths "ont, avant d'être admis parmi les guerriers, à subir des rudes épreuves," and then describes a ceremony of forcing boys to submit to ant bites, a practice which certainly never existed among the Tukuna.[1]

838 *Homosexuals.*—Tessmann presents very precise information on homosexual intercourse between boys and youths: "Knaben und Jünglinge pflegen allgemein gleichgeschlechtlichen Verkehr, zumal auf den Plätzen im Busch wo sie spielen und kleine Häuschen errichten. Dieser Verkehr wird nicht bestraft wenn der Vater davon hört, sie werden nicht verachtet. Es giebt auch echte Gleichgeschlechtliche, die *tawuenangi* genannt werden."[2] If this is really so, I myself should have seen some indication of these practices among the Indians; however, not only did I fail to observe anything of the kind, but I was soon obliged to seek information from various trustworthy informants. All were aware that this vice exists among the Neobrazilian riverbank laborers, but they could cite no instance of its occurrence among the Tukuna. When I inquired the significance of Tessmann's term for homosexuals, pronouncing it in all possible ways, it remained completely incomprehensible to the Indians, except for the first syllable, *ta* (we).

Girls' puberty

881 As soon as a girl senses her first menstruation she removes all her ornaments and, if her mother is absent, hangs them in the house so that they will be seen immediately; she then hides in a thicket near the house. When the mother arrives, she realizes from the ornaments what has happened and goes out to seek her daughter, who responds to the maternal call by striking one piece of dry wood against another. Round the bed of the girl, which is almost always on the upper floor of the house, the mother then promptly erects a partition made of mats of *urucuri* thatching, to which she conducts the girl as soon as night falls.

Seclusion.—From then on, the adolescent is treated as a "vərĕkj," remaining in seclusion, completely invisible and inaudible to all except her mother and paternal aunt, though not required to observe any diet. There are the most fantastic and inaccurate reports of this phase of seclusion. For example, Bates writes:

"The Tukuna have the singular custom . . . of treating their young girls, on their showing the first signs of womanhood, as if they had committed some crime. They are sent up to the *girao* under the smoky and filthy roof, and kept there on a very meagre diet, sometimes for a whole month. I heard of one poor girl dying

[1] Castelnau, p. 46.
[2] Tessmann, p. 563.

2: Nimuendajú E-5 (1941-1942) 1948
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861 More than among other tribes, *Tucuna* children receive corporal punish-
824 ment, especially with the external application of nettle flowers that are grown for this purpose at the edge of the yard. They play with dolls
524 carved of muirapiranga, figures of animals, little canoes, small bows and arrows, and buzz-disks of gourd shells.

173 **Boys' puberty observances.**—There is a tradition that in former times,
881 young men were initiated when their voices changed, being secluded and then perhaps formally admitted to the secrets of the megaphone (tá/ki) through an application of snuff called ká/vi, which is still used occasionally.

114 There are no vestiges of homosexuality, as claimed by Tessmann (1930,
838 p. 563).

881 **Girls' puberty rites.**—At her first menstruation, a girl is secluded in the house loft. This is not so cruel as certain travelers (Bates, 1863, 2:406)
[114] proclaim. Every girl submits willingly, convinced that her peculiar condi-
[626] tion requires it and that its omission would be dangerous, as she is surrounded by invisible "immortals" and demons, who seek contact with her and at times cause extraordinary supernatural experiences. Many stories told to a girl in seclusion illustrate this dangerous state.

[342] The people hasten to prepare for the girl a circular seclusion room adjacent to the east or west wall of the house, according to her moiety.
[532] They decorate the walls with painted bands and lines, and figures of the sun, moon, morning star, and deer, the last a symbol of vigilance and not a "totem."

[262] Preparations for the feast sometimes require months. They prepare roast meat and beverages and make the house ready. The girl's father is host, but her paternal uncle and his wife direct all ceremonies concerning
[574] her person, being wholly responsible for her. Friends and acquaintances
[202] receive two invitations to the feast; the second, which specifies the date,
[534] is issued to the sound of the bark trumpet, which is carried hidden in the canoe.

In the exterior portion of the house, corresponding to the girl's seclu-
[534] sion room, a long fence is made with straw walls to conceal the megaphone (tá/ki), its statues, and the bark trumpet which operate behind it each night of the feast and are removed before daybreak and hidden underwater in the creek. People are chosen and invited to operate these instruments by the head of the house when the time comes; there is no permanent assignment. Inside the fence of the megaphone, snuff (ká/vi) or tobacco
[276] powder is taken with several ingredients (but not parica). The snuff is kept in a snail shell and blown into the nose by means of an apparatus made of a tubular bone and two quills of royal sparrow hawk feathers, or by means of a simple taboca (bamboo) tube. Boys of 7 or older cus-
[562] tomarily are given snuff, after which they may see and touch the instru-
[858] ments within the fence, which are taboo to women and to boys who have not yet had it.